

*** NEWS RELEASE ***
SALINAS MAN SENTENCED TO
50 YEARS TO LIFE
FOR FIRST DEGREE MURDER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Judge Pamela Butler sentenced Luis Espinoza, age 30 of Salinas, to 50 years-to-life in prison. The defendant was found guilty of first degree murder with a gun enhancement on October 9, 2015. The verdict came after a two week trial.

On September 12, 2012, the victim, Richard Pimentel, got into a fistfight at a market on Main Street in Salinas with a member of a criminal street gang. Espinoza, who is a member of the same gang and a friend of the person who was in the fight with Pimentel, quickly ran from the area to some nearby apartments. He emerged from the apartments less than a minute later, and was caught on surveillance camera running to catch up to Pimentel. Once he reached Pimentel, Espinoza shot him at point blank range with a single bullet to the back of the head.

The case was investigated by Salinas Detectives Robert Van Blarcom and Rudy Roman who despite having no eyewitnesses positively identify the defendant as the shooter, were nevertheless able to link the defendant to the murder through the use of numerous surveillance cameras.

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